



*United States Attorney
Southern District of New York*

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CONTACT: U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
HERBERT HADAD, MEGAN GAFFNEY
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
(212) 637-2600

CELL-HEAD OF MEXICAN COCAINE TRAFFICKING ORGANIZATION
SENTENCED IN FEDERAL COURT TO FIFTY-FIVE YEARS'
IMPRISONMENT

DAVID N. KELLEY, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that yesterday afternoon, JAIME CHAVEZ, a leader in a Mexico-based cocaine cartel, was sentenced to 660 months, or 55 years' imprisonment on narcotics trafficking and firearms charges. CHAVEZ was previously convicted by a Federal jury in January of conspiracy to distribute cocaine, and possessing a firearm equipped with a silencer in furtherance of the drug crime.

In sentencing CHAVEZ, United States District Judge GERARD E. LYNCH found that CHAVEZ was a leader and organizer in an armed conspiracy that distributed in excess of 150 kilograms of cocaine. Judge LYNCH also noted that CHAVEZ's possession of a firearm equipped with a silencer demonstrated that the firearm had only one purpose: violence against another person. Judge LYNCH also noted CHAVEZ's history of recidivism, which began at

an early age and demonstrated a lack of respect for the law.

Several members of CHAVEZ's organization had previously pled guilty to narcotics conspiracy charges, and one co-defendant, ANASTACIO ACOSTA-FELIX, was convicted at trial with CHAVEZ. CHAVEZ's Sinaloa, Mexico-based cartel boss, SANTIAGO CHAVEZ-AYON, was arrested in Mexico in March and remains in Mexican custody. The United States Attorney's Office has submitted to the Mexican government a formal request for his extradition on cocaine trafficking charges.

The investigation that resulted in yesterday's sentence was conducted by the United States Attorney's Office's International Narcotics Trafficking Unit, and offices of the United States Drug Enforcement Administration ("DEA") and the United States Bureau of Immigrations and Customs Enforcement ("ICE") in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago and Mexico, under the auspices of the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force. Mr. KELLEY praised the outstanding investigative efforts of the DEA and ICE agents in the U.S. and abroad.

Assistant United States Attorneys ANIRUDH BANSAL and ERIC SNYDER are in charge of the prosecution.

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